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### TWO RAVENS.

The raven has a bad reputation as a thief, but it seems from a story told in *Chamber's Journal* that under certain circumstances he may become as thorough a sheep-killer as any cur. The writer thus describes two ravens, or corbies, as the birds are called in Scotland. "In a cliff not half a mile from my early northern home," he says, "a pair of ravens every summer built their nest. They had been there no one knew how long. The nest was about midway between the top of the cliff and the sea at its base, being placed within a small cave on the face of the precipice, where it was safe from all invaders.

"The young ones were insatiable; and as their parents liked to see them well fed, it occasionally happened that a hen or duck might be found missing from the farmyard.

"In the same cliff, but nearer the water, and just over the mouth of the cave, a cormorant—or shag, as we call the bird—built her nest on an open shelf, so that we could see the eggs from the top of the cliff.

"The male raven had seen them, too, and resolved to transfer the eggs to his nest.

"But this did not prove to be so easy as it had looked; for the shag, with her long neck and hooked bill, defended her property to the last.

"The raven did not like to come into close quarters with her, but sought to gain the eggs by art and perseverance.

"He would alight on one end of the shelf, and slide up to the shag as near as he dared, and picking at the outside material of her nest, and thus provoking her to make a dive at him, so as to draw her off the eggs.

"That gained, he would spring to the other side of the nest, and seize an egg. But the shag would wheel around and meet him with open mouth, sometimes ruffling a feather out of him.

"This went on, now and then, for several days, till one day the shag got a firm hold on him, and both tumbled over plump into the sea.

"Unfortunately, the shag lost her hold as they fell into the water, or perhaps she had to let go, and the raven, getting on her back, was soon on the wing.

"The shag by-and-by got up also; but ere she could reach her nest, the raven, drenched as he was, had removed the eggs, not to his nest, but a short distance, from which he could carry them away at his leisure.

"The poor shag had no avenger, and there the matter seemed to terminate. But one night, shortly after, a thunder-storm came on from the direction of the sea in front of the cliff.

"The rain was heavy and the thunder loud; and next morning the 'corbies' nest, with their family, had been washed away.

"I saw the bereaved parents sitting on the cliff, each a picture of desolation, especially the mother-bird.

"After a day or two, we began to hear of sheep being destroyed by some strange agency, and then we were told that it was the work of the 'corbies.'

"This did not seem credible; but more than one person could testify to having seen the birds at work.

"One morning, a choice sheep of mine was found destroyed; and I started at once with a gun to shoot the destroyers.

"But they knew what the weapon meant; and for eight days, early and late, my efforts were unavailing.

"At last I killed a raven, though whether one of the destructive birds I could not be certain; but from that day the sheep were safe, and the birds never again seen.

"During nine days these two ravens killed no fewer than thirty strong-tulled sheep. Their mode of action was discovered to be as follows:

"The mother-bird would fly on to the sheep's face, fixing her claws below the eyes, and seizing the top of the head with her bill, would flap with her wings and scream frightfully.

"Her mate, ever mate, ever near, would, when the sheep was so fixed, get on her back and dig a hole through to the kidneys.

"The sheep, distracted and blinded, would sometimes run over the cliff, sometimes into a ditch and sometimes fall down exhausted.

"In no case were the ravens known to leave their victim until life was extinct, snapping the windpipe to that end, when other means failed; and in no case were they known to feed on the sheep's carcass.

"The loss of their young ones seemed to have excited them to madness, and the sheep seemed to be the only living thing on which they could vent their rage."

Mr. Clay, of Cairo, N. Y., wooed a widow, who would not have him because he was gray. Then he began to use hair dye, and just as he had succeeded in getting his hair turned yellow he heard that the widow had married another. Mr. Clay concluded that his life was a failure, and that if he could not attain happiness by dyeing it was time for him to die. So he drank a bottle of dye and died.

A Hoosier at dinner on a Mississippi palatial steamer was about to reach out for something before him, but the waiter, checking him, exclaimed: "That, sir, is a dessert." "O," said the Hoosier, "I don't care if it's a wilderness. I'm going to eat it all the same."

### ST. PETERSBURG PICTURE.

St Isaac's Cathedral—A Structure Which Cost \$14,000,000.

This (St. Isaac) is an illustration of the fact that when Russia really puts forth an effort she can and does surpass the modern world in the splendor of her architecture; since the treasures of her quarries are exhaustless, and the skill of her lapidaries unexcelled. It is, however, unfortunate that there is no eminence in the city on which St. Isaac could have been placed, for at this distance it is impossible to see to advantage the magnificent flight of steps leading to its portico. Yet, I assure you, each of these steps is granite, worthy of the Egyptian temple of Karnak. Moreover, the portico itself is supported by stupendous columns of the same materials, sixty feet in height, and seven in diameter, and polished like the unbroken surface of a mirror.

"Well," you perhaps exclaim, "what is there so remarkable in this portal to distinguish it from others?" But look along those columns for their lines of juncture. You will discover none. They are monoliths. Yes, every one of them one solid mass of beautifully polished stone! With the exception of Pompey's pillar in Egypt and the Alexander column they are indeed the largest monoliths which the hand of man has ever quarried, turned and polished! Now, ordinarily, a temple is content with one such portal as this; but reflect that this magnificence is here repeated on each of the four sides of the edifice.

Moreover, from the center of the structure the mighty dome rises to the height of 236 feet, and is itself also surrounded by thirty monolithic shafts; while the roof, which gleams like a miniature sun, is covered with a mass of gold worth \$250,000. What wonder. Imagine whole columns of them five times as high as ourselves! Yet this is only in keeping with the entire building; for we tread there a pavement of variegated marble; we ascend steps of polished jasper; we clasp railings of alabaster; we are surrounded by walls gleaming with pieces of jasper, verd antique porphyry and malachite cut in various designs and exquisitely polished, interspersed here and there with vast mosaic portraits of the saints, and shrines of gold incrusting with jewels! The whole, in fact, is so magnificent as to seem incredible till actually seen. "Then that the cost of the whole cathedral was more than \$14,000,000, \$1,000,000 having been expended in merely driving into the soil a perfect forest of piles to make a sufficiently strong foundation for the enormous mass!

Now for the interior. "Before its gilded altar screen are ten columns of malachite thirty feet high, and columns of lapis-lazuli, each of which cost \$30,000. This exceeds every other display of these marvelous stones which the world knows. We are accustomed to regard a small fragment of either of them as a valuable ornament. [Stoddard's Red-Letter Days Abroad.]

### HOW A POET GOT EVEN WITH AN EDITOR.

John Lang, the editor of the New York *Gazette*, having once alluded to McDonald Clarke, the poet, as "that fellow with zigzag brains," the insulted poet rushed into the sanctum of the *Commercial*, then conducted by Colonel Stone, blazing with fury.

"Do you see, colonel," said he, "what Johnny Lang says of me? He calls me a man with zigzag brains."

"Well, and so you are," said the colonel. "I think it is a very happy description of you."

"Oh! that's all very well for you to say," retorted McDonald. "I'll take a joke from you, but Johnny Lang shall not spoil my well-earned reputation. Zigzag brains, forsooth! Zigzag brains—think of it, colonel! I must have a chance to reply to him in your paper."

"How much space do you want?" inquired the colonel.

"I think I could use him up in a column and a half," said McDonald.

"A column and a half," said the colonel. "Stuff! You shall have no such space. I'll give you just four lines and if that will answer, fire away; but not a line more."

The poet thus driven into a narrow corner, sat down and instantly wrote off the following neat epigram:

"I can tell Johnny Lang in the way of a laugh,  
In reply to his rude and unmanly scrawl,  
That in my humble sense it is better by half  
To have brains that are zigzag than no brains at all."

"There colonel," said he, "let Johnny Lang put that in his pipe and smoke it."

The Christian faith is a grand cathedral, with divinely pictured windows. Standing without, you see no glory, nor can possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendor.

A couple of tramps went into a lager beer saloon and drank a quantity of beer for which they had no money to pay. The proprietor instructed his bartender to "Darn those rascals inside out."

### HOW THE TREASURY IS GUARDED.

A party of Englishmen who recently visited Washington expressed surprise at the absence of guards at the Treasury.

"Why," they said, "at the Bank of England, the military is always on duty, and to get past it and into the building is worth one's life, unless he has authority. Here I don't see a guard." But there are guards, and plenty of them, only they don't wear red coats, and parade up and down the street in front of the building. That isn't the way we do things here. "Do you see this armory," said Capt. Cough, the chief of the force, to your correspondent to-day, opening a door as he did so and displaying line after line of loaded revolvers. They were of the largest and best variety known to the military authorities. "We have sixty men armed with these," he said, "and nearly all old soldiers. I should like to see any successful attempt to rob the treasury. These men are divided into watches, and are on duty in all parts of the building at all hours. After the force of clerks and officials goes home at night, our officers enter and inspect every room, see that the safes are locked, the heating apparatus all right, and the water turned off. If a safe is found unlocked a man is put in charge of it, and the person whose duty it was to see it locked is sent for. Of course that does not happen often, and the man who does forget once to lock his safe does not forget it twice; but occasionally we do find one open. Then after the rooms are inspected and the guard set, the lieutenant makes his rounds every two hours, and the watchman patrols his beat every fifteen minutes or oftener."

"Has there ever been an attempt successful or otherwise, to rob the treasury?"

"Never. It would be an impossibility."

Col. Webster, Chief clerk of the Treasury, is at the head of the whole watch, though Capt. Cough has the personal direction of their movements. They are all inspected by Col. Webster, and are liable to visits at all times of the night from the Secretary or his Chief Clerk. Treasurer Spinner, it is related, once found himself in a very nervous state of mind at night and unable to sleep, having an indefinable feeling that something was wrong at the Treasury. He tossed about while unable to sleep, and finally dressed himself and started for the Treasury, to be met by a messenger coming to tell him that a safe containing millions of dollars had been found unlocked. It is said that he always slept in the building after that, and always visited the safes in person before retiring, to see that they were locked. Perhaps it was his nervousness over the fright that made his signature so crooked. —[Baltimore American.]

### HOW THE JUDGE ENTERED THE HOUSE.

Jefferson's great height and slender figure exposed him to much ridicule from his opponents; his sobriquet with them was "Long Tom." Nothing could present a more striking or more singular contrast than the figures of Mr. Jefferson and Gen. Knox, the one very short, the other lank and lean, and unusually tall. They happened to meet one morning on the steps of Gen. Washington's lodgings. The two gentlemen approached from opposite directions, and arriving at the same moment, a contest in etiquette took place between them. The general at the head of an army, and full of its chivalric politeness, could not think of passing in before the co-equal head of the Department of State, while the civil officer of the Government was equally averse to taking precedence of the military, and they stood for some moments, each drawing back and waving the other forward. In the midst of this entertaining scene the notorious Judge Peters, the greatest wit of his day, came up directly in front. Perceiving how matters stood, and casting a sly glance from one side to the other, he pushed boldly between them, exclaiming, as he passed: "Pardon me, gentlemen, if, in my haste, I dash through thick and thin."

### RALEIGH AND QUEEN ELIZABETH.

The New York *Life* has the following: As Queen Elizabeth, attended by Sir Walter Raleigh and a retinue of gilded courtiers, was one day walking through the streets of London, she came to a particularly muddy spot, which she hesitated to cross. Raleigh was about to throw down his cloak to her, in order that she might cross dryshod, when he reflected that it was of costly velvet, lavishly ornamented with old lace, and so would infallibly be spotted. Accordingly, with great presence of mind, he whispered loudly to Sir Christopher Hatten that he had always contended, and would with his heart's blood maintain, that her Majesty had the smallest feet and neatest ankles in the world, and that the calumnious report that she wore eleven was a malignant invention of the Spanish court. Nor did the ruse fail of its effect, as the virgin Queen, lifting her royal skirts with almost exaggerated enthusiasm, went through the puddle with characteristic resolution, and halting on the further side, shook her sceptre under the nose of the astonished diplomat, with a royal oath: "Are they eleven, you Romish dog? Are they eleven?"

### BARTLEY HART'S BENEFIT.

How Some New York Politicians Ruffed For a "Splendid Bay Horse."

The announcement was recently made that a raffle for a "splendid bay horse," for the benefit of Bartley Hart, who has become totally blind, would take place in New York on Saturday night. The meeting was at McManus' Third Avenue Hotel. Tickets were freely sold at fifty cents each. Politicians of all shades thronged the hotel on the eventful night, each one hoping to win the "splendid bay horse."

After many impromptu speeches concerning the condition of poor Bartley Hart, ex-Assemblyman Steinert rang the bell and said: "The first thing in order is for some one of the numerous charitable gentlemen here to propose three cheers for poor, blind Bartley Hart, our beloved and much afflicted friend, a man whom you all know."

Three cheers and a tiger being given, Barrister Nesbit moved to "donate the \$150 received from the sale of tickets to Mr. Hart and declare the raffle off."

"Will somebody second Mr. Nesbit's motion?" manfully asked Chairman Steinert.

"I rise to a point of order," shouted Michael Finn.

"The motion is out of order, sir; wait till some one wins the beast, and then let the motion be made, for who can tell what complications may arise? If we don't chuck for the baste and lave it with the present owner it's just the same as giving him a horse, and we are here to make a present to poor old Bart, but not to make a present to owners of horses."

Loud was the applause that greeted this logical speech and the original motion was not seconded.

"Then," said Chairman Steinert, "we'll chuck and begin with the Hon. Thomas Carroll."

A table was provided and Patrick McManus and William Hebbard were appointed judges.

"Carroll throws 39," said the tally keeper, and a breathless silence reigned until a dozen had tried to top that number when Michael Goode got in 41.

Fifty chances were thrown before that was beaten when Schuyler White, of the Custom House, secured 43.

"It bates me drams," murmured Mr. Finn, sadly, and then he picked up the cup and scored 48.

"Be the howly mouse, the baste is me own," he shouted excitedly, and as man after man tried their luck without "topping" him until at least a hundred had thrown, he became nervous and sought some nerve soother at the end of the room.

"Only fifty more chances," said Chairman Steinert, as Dr. Richards slowly walked to the table and rolled fifty-three out of a possible fifty-four. Then did looks of sadness flit over the faces of the remaining forty-nine possessors of chances, while Mr. Finn was completely overcome.

Fate had decided it. None even tied the doctor, and after a few minutes of inexpressible silence he was declared by the judges the fortunate winner.

"I congratulate you, doctor," said Mr. Steinert, "and allow me to state that you will find this magnificent animal in a stall at the stables opposite the Yorkville Police Court, on Fifty-seventh street."

"Three cheers for Dr. Richards!" cried Mr. Mehrer, and they were given with a will.

"What'll you have, boys? Sing out," said the doctor, by way of returning the compliment. They sung out. Some sung out twice, and a great odor of cloves filled the air.

"I move we, as a body, escort the doctor to his house, and as a body view the beast that might have been ours," said Ald. Carroll. With the victor at the head the procession filed down Fifty-seventh street to the stable, where, with trembling hands, the doctor opened the door to gaze upon the animal that would convey him on his errands of mercy.

A wooden toy horse, six inches in length, was tied to the manger, and when the doctor saw it he turned pale and gasped for breath. There was no need for further speech making. He grasped the side of the stall and seemed dazed. When he recovered he found himself alone. As he hurried by McManus' Hotel loud laughter and the music of clinking glasses greeted his ears. —[N. Y. Journal.]

THE STAKED PLAINS.—The staked plains are fast losing their reputation for being a barren desert. Says the Crosby County (Texas) *Sun*: "We learn from a gentleman just in from that section that the colony of Quakers who are settled on the staked plains, in Crosby County, have the finest crops this year that were ever seen in Northern Texas. They have sent word to the stockmen in that county that they will sell corn at ten cents a bushel less than it can be bought on the railroad, and they will be prepared to furnish any reasonable amount."

Lord Coleridge says he abstains from saying anything about what has struck him in this country. Perhaps the great Judge has been so unfortunate as to run afoul of Mr. Sullivan.